Good morning. Thank you Christian, for inviting me to join you here at George Washington University. Your commitment to studying, developing and recommending effective security policies closely aligns with the mandate under which the Transportation Security Administration operates every day. You are a valued partner, and your continued input is appreciated.

This morning I want to share some thoughts with all of you regarding the state of transportation security in the United States; provide a brief update of where we stand in our efforts to implement risk-based security procedures; and then I would like to hear from you as to how we can continue working together to strengthen it for all travelers, regardless of where they are going or how they are getting there. Effective partnerships with groups such as this are integral to our future success.

Though our mission includes all modes of transportation, there’s no doubt we are most often associated with our work throughout the nation’s airports. For the better of the last two years, the men and women of TSA have been dedicated to transforming our organization from one that screens every passenger the same – the “one-size-fits-all” approach – to one that employs a more effective, risk-based, intelligence-driven model.

Around the country our workforce is using the latest technology, analyzing and sharing intelligence in real time, and applying the principles of risk-mitigation and risk-management to carry out TSA’s mission – safeguarding the free movement of people and commerce across all modes of transportation. Adopting a risk-based approach to transportation security also gives us the flexibility to adjust to changing travel patterns and an ever shifting threat landscape.

With respect to maritime and surface transportation, our approach has always been risk-based. In the mass transit environment, for example, the most effective way to strengthen security throughout the vast number of distinct bus and subway networks throughout the United States is to focus on risk assessment and risk mitigation, putting our resources to work where they can do the most good, and have the greatest overall impact on security.

In the latter half of 2011, we began looking at ways to take risk-based methodologies and put them to work in the aviation sector, which we know is still a favored target for extremists and terror organizations. We began to consider if there were certain age-based decisions we could make regarding security screening operations. In other words, did current intelligence indicate the possibility of modifying our security screening protocols to expedite the movement of some passengers through the checkpoint based solely on their age? We believe the answer to that was, and is, yes.

As you may know, the first group of passengers to receive some form of modified and expedited checkpoint security screening were children 12 years of age or younger. We began a pilot program at a small number of airports in early 2012, and the feedback from the traveling public was immediate and positive, leading us to expand this initiative to all 450-plus airports across the U.S. Since then, more than 40 million children have made their way through airport security a little quicker and perhaps a little easier, without compromising security.

Similar changes were then tested for passengers age 75 and older. We followed the model established for young travelers and tested the concept in a handful of airports, analyzed the results and rolled it out...
Recent data indicate this change has allowed another 17 million passengers to experience modified security screening since we implemented the new protocols. In both cases – whether a passenger is 12 and younger or 75 and older – the changes to the way they are screened are the same; that is, they are permitted to wear a belt, their shoes and a light jacket throughout the screening process. In addition, children may be permitted a second pass through AIT to resolve a blurred scan in an effort to greatly reduce the need for any sort of pat down.

Perhaps the most impactful initiative begun under the broad umbrella of risk-based security is TSA Pre✓™, a known and trusted traveler type of program built on the understanding that most passengers pose no risk to aviation security.

In addition to the screening modifications in place for passengers 12 and younger or 75 and older, TSA Pre✓™ passengers are screened in dedicated lanes and are not required to remove their laptops or their 3-1-1 compliant liquids from their carry-on bags. Our goal was to roll out this program to 35 of the nation’s busiest airports in 2012, and we succeeded in doing so. Early in 2013 we added another five airports, bringing that total to 40, and as of this week more than 10 million passengers have been safely screened through TSA Pre✓™.

We believe there are measurable benefits associated with such an approach to aviation security. Increasing throughput at our nation’s busiest airports provides significant value to frequent, trusted travelers.

At the same time, reducing the amount of time our officers devote to screening low-risk travelers increases the resources available to deter and detect the next attack. This is a fundamental principle on which risk-mitigation strategies for securing all modes of transportation are built.

The ongoing success of several other risk-based initiatives at airports around the country comes as a result of enhanced cooperation between TSA, the airline industry, and the traveling public. As many of you know, one example of this is a known crew member program through which commercial airline pilots and flight crews receive expedited security screening from Transportation Security Officers.

Airline pilots are trusted with the security of the aircraft and the lives of every passenger onboard each time they fly. Flight crew members all undergo similar background checks as a condition of their employment. These individuals are known and, if they are in good standing with their employers, they do not pose a security risk and should be screened accordingly. To date, more than 6 million crew members have been screened using a risk-based methodology.

As men and women who put their lives on the line every day, United States active duty military members are also receiving expedited security screening at airport checkpoints around the country.

Of course, checkpoint security screening is only one layer of a multi-layered security system that stretches from curbside to cockpit, and while the capability to detect, deter or disrupt a potential attack exists in any single layer, the combined effect of all layers produces an even stronger aviation security system, and one that is becoming the gold standard around the world.

Along those same lines, I want to update all of you on changes we are proposing to the list of items currently prohibited from being carried into the cabin of an aircraft – most notably small, folding pocket knives. This decision was met with both criticism and support by passengers, members of Congress, the news media and industry stakeholder groups. I have personally met with many of those who oppose my decision and I understand and appreciate their concerns.

I went to Capitol Hill and answered lawmakers’ questions regarding these changes, including discussions in a classified setting to share with them some of the intelligence that helped form the basis
for my decision. While our original intention was to make these changes effective at the end of April, we are still gathering input from key stakeholders and have delayed implementation until that process is complete.

For context, back in August 2010, the International Civil Aviation Organization changed aviation security standards to permit knives with a blade length of 6 cm or less to be carried in the cabin of aircraft. Since that global change, and excluding U.S. originating passengers, there have been more than 5 billion commercial airline passengers worldwide allowed to carry these knives. We are unaware of any report of a security incident aboard any commercial aircraft worldwide involving these items.

With hardened cockpit doors, better identification of individual passengers against terrorist watch lists, and the demonstrated willingness of passengers to intervene to assist flight crew during a security incident, it is the judgment of many security experts worldwide, a judgment with which I agree, that a small pocket knife is simply not going to result in the catastrophic failure of an aircraft. An undetected and successfully detonated improvised explosive device will.

Consider the steady string of attempted attacks in the eleven years since 9/11; Richard Reid, the so-called shoe bomber in December 2001, the August 2006 liquids plot to bring down multiple aircraft between the UK and the United States, the Christmas Day, 2009 failed bombing by Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, the October 2010 Yemen cargo plot in which sophisticated IEDs were placed inside toner cartridges and placed on cargo flights coming to the United States. In each instance, the attempt to bring down an aircraft began overseas, targeting flights originating elsewhere and flying into the United States.

Most recently, in the spring of 2012, due to outstanding international intelligence collection, operations and coordination, the U.S. and other governments thwarted a second attempt by AQAP – al-Qaeda on the Arabian Peninsula – to carry out an attack on a passenger aircraft by using an improvised explosive device, or IED, that was completely non-metallic. It featured an innovative design and a concealment technique that was similar to the Christmas Day, 2009, attempted attack. This device, however, involved a new type of explosive, as well as a more sophisticated initiation and detonation system than the device that failed in 2009. This new device also had a new level of redundancy, or a back-up, in the event the primary system failed.

I have a brief video clip from our colleagues at the FBI, simulating the destructive force this device would have had, if successfully detonated.

Clearly, this is evidence that these groups are going to school on what they believe are the limits of our detection capabilities, and it shows that their intentions to attack U.S. and western interests has not wavered.

This most recent attempt also underscores the fact that our enemies still consider the destruction of passenger or cargo aircraft either inside or flying into or over the United States as their number one priority. Inside TSA, one of our greatest concerns is not necessarily with those on a watch list or with some known affiliation or association with terrorist organizations.

We know these individuals warrant and receive greater scrutiny and screening when and if they attempt to fly. Instead, it’s the unknown radicalized individual who has somehow acquired the skill and ability to build an improvised explosive device and tries to bring it onboard an aircraft, whether in checked or carry-on baggage, but has not surfaced on anyone’s radar.

Plots such as this affirm that our focus at the checkpoint must be detecting improvised explosive devices and the components that could be used to construct IEDs.

Following the horrific attack at the conclusion of the Boston Marathon, and news of a recent plot to attack passenger rail service between Canada and the United States, it is clear that our security efforts
need to be equally strong across all modes of transportation.

It also underscores the fact that intelligence is critical, and that strong, timely collaboration, both domestically and internationally, is essential, and why our efforts as one piece of a global transportation security spectrum must remain focused.

So, what else is ahead for TSA? What can the traveling public expect to see in the coming months and years?

Considering the success of TSA Pre✓™, from both a security perspective and the positive effect on passenger throughput, one of our primary objects in the near term is to continue growing the population of eligible travelers in locations where TSA Pre✓™ is already up and running. As I mentioned earlier, there are now 40 airports offering expedited screening through TSA Pre✓™, with system-wide volumes expected to reach more than 1 million passengers each month.

We are also expanding the TSA Pre✓™ population is through an initiative known as Managed Inclusion. By combining other layers of security already in place – in this case Behavior Detection Officers and passenger screening canines – we are making real-time threat assessments to more fully utilize TSA Pre✓™ screening lanes in airports where they are not operating at their full capacity.

As with all of our risk-based security initiatives there is an element of randomness to Managed Inclusion and not all passengers considered for TSA Pre✓™ screening are directed to those checkpoints every time they fly.

When it comes to strengthening transportation security, anything we can do to help focus our resources on potentially higher-risk individuals is beneficial for all of us, so we are looking at more opportunities to increase passenger awareness and ways to further implement the principles of risk-based security in other transportation sectors, including the passenger rail and mass transit environments, just to name a few.

In addition, TSA is focusing efforts on strengthening the global supply chain with enhancements that extend beyond our borders in 2013. For example, late last year the President signed the No Hassle Flying Act, authorizing TSA to eliminate some duplicative baggage rescreening requirements for checked bags arriving from certain foreign airports where screening is commensurate to that which we have here in the U.S.

International travel also provides another way to continue expanding the TSA Pre✓™ population. We began doing this last year by including Canadian citizens who are members of the NEXUS trusted-traveler program and are flying domestically throughout the United States.

Earlier this month we began extending TSA Pre✓™ screening to international travel by including outbound flights from participating airports as well as domestic connecting flights for TSA Pre✓™ passengers arriving into the United States from international origins.

Taking the principles of risk-based security and applying them beyond our borders is a sensible approach to what is clearly a concern for the transportation industry worldwide.

Before I open the floor to your questions, I want to briefly discuss a few initiatives relative to cargo security. Thanks to the success of TSA’s innovative Certified Cargo Screening Program, or CCSP, shippers, freight forwarders, warehouse operators – anyone involved in the supply chain – were all brought into the cargo security process.

By designing and implementing a system that allows security screening to take place throughout the supply chain, shippers and manufacturers are able to avoid the potential bottleneck of having every piece of freight screened at an airport.
An extensive outreach campaign, coupled with a high level of transparency and collaboration with our air cargo industry partners gave us the ability to certify every entity seeking certification and on August 3, 2010 the domestic component of 100% air cargo screening was met.

One result of this success, as I mentioned earlier, is that we are seeing more and more frequently plots that originate overseas, involving flights into the United States. There may be a perception that security abroad is not as robust or formidable as it is here in the United States.

In fact, less than three months after meeting the 100% goal for domestic cargo screening, an attempted terrorist attack in which two U.S.-bound packages containing viable bombs originating from Yemen was discovered. Once again, sophisticated IEDs were the method and the aviation sector was the target.

In response, TSA immediately issued a series of Security Directives and Emergency Amendments, implementing protocols for risk-based analysis and tiered screening, including the implementation of the “Trusted Shipper” concept, for international inbound air cargo on passenger and all-cargo air carriers.

Secretary Napolitano approved this risk-based approach to implement the 9/11 Act requirements for 100 percent screening for international inbound air cargo on passenger aircraft, and established a goal of December 2012 for industry compliance, and on December 3, 2012, TSA and industry met the requirement that 100 percent screening of international inbound air cargo on passenger aircraft, and our partners have reported no issues or challenges associated with meeting this requirement.

In addition, TSA developed the National Cargo Security Program (NCSP) as a critical component of the U.S. strategy to enhance global supply chain security and sustain 100 percent screening.

NCSP introduced efficiencies for both government and private industry by reducing duplicative requirements, allowing screening to be completed earlier in the supply chain, and permitting the optimal use of distributed screening locations so that screening can occur at various nodes along the supply chain.

Through this effort we have recognized the security programs of 35 partner countries representing 67 percent of the inbound cargo onboard passenger aircraft.

By continuing to refine our processes and our partnerships with the air cargo industry, we are meeting our mandate, strengthening transportation security and helping ensure the free movement of people and cargo not only here in the United States, but around the world as well.

Thank you once again for the invitation to join all of you this morning, and at this time I am happy to open the floor to any questions you may have.